

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 USIA-04 IO-03 /013 R

66621

DRAFTED BY: NEA/INS:RDLORTON

APPROVED BY: NEA/INS:LBLAINGEN

USIA:RCLIFTON

IO/CMD:AYODER

NEA/INS:JELEADER

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R 052154Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

UNCLAS STATE 069521

FOLLOWING REPEAT COLOMBO 939 ACTION USINFO WASHDC, INFO
SECSTATE, USIA, APRIL 5,

QUTE

UNCLAS COLOMBO 0939

USIAC

E.O. 11652 N/A

SUBJ: COLOMBO DECLARATION ADOPTED

USIA FOR MEDIA REACTION STAFF (IOR/M), IPS, IBS, IOP

COLOMBO, APRIL 5, LEADERS OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, ASSEMBLED
IN COLOMBO IN ANNUAL SESSION OF ECAFE, TODAY PROCLAIMED FOOD,
ENERGY, RAW MATERIALS AND THE NEED FOR EXTERNAL FINANCIAL
RESOURCES AS THE REGION'S "MOST URGENT PRIORITIES" REQUIRING
ACTION.

IN THE "COLOMBO DECLARATION", ADOPTED WITHOUT A SINGLE
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DISSENTIENT VOICE, THEY ALSO PROCLAIMED THEIR RESOLVE TO

MOBILIZE "ALL AVAILABLE DOMESTIC RESOURCES" AND TO STRENGTHEN THEIR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TO MEET THESE PRIORITIES.

THEY CALLED UPON THE WORLD COMMUNITY TO FOCUS, AS ITS HIGHEST PRIORITY, ON CONCERTED ACTION TO ENSURE ADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES AND SUFFICIENT FLOW OF EXTERNAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE NATIONS AND PEOPLES OF THE REGION.

THE LEADERS, FROM 38 MEMBER AND ASSOCIATE MEMBER COUNTRIES, HAVE BEEN MEETING SINCE WEDNESDAY, 27 MARCH FOR THE 1974 SESSION OF ECAFE -- ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST.

THE "COLOMBO DECLARATION" MARKED THE HIGH POINT OF NINE DAYS OF DEBATE ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION IN THE ECAFE REGION, AND THE DISCUSSION AND CONSULTATIONS TO AGREE ON MEASURES TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE PRESSING PROBLEMS OF THE AREA.

AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO SRI LANKA, CHRISTOPHER VAN HOLLEN, MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON THE COLOMBO DECLARATION:

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I APPRECIATE YOUR GIVING ME THE FLOOR IN ORDER THAT THE VIEWS OF MY DELEGATION ON THE COLOMBO DECLARATION MIGHT BE SPREAD UPON THE RECORD.

AS YOU WILL RECALL, MY COLLEAGUE AMBASSADOR FERGUSON IN COMMENTING UPON THE PRIME MINISTER'S INITIATIVE WHICH WAS REVEALED IN THE OPENING SESSION OF THIS CONFERENCE, STATED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SHARED HER CONVICTION THAT ADEQUATE PROVISION OF FOOD AND FERTILIZERS WAS A MATTER OF GREAT URGENCY. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ATTEMPT AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE RESOLUTION OF THIS PRIORITY PROBLEM. THEN TOO, ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, DELEGATIONS TO THIS CONFERENCE HAVE EXPRESSED GRAVE CONCERN AS TO THESE MATTERS. WE ARE HAPPY TO SEE THESE CONCERNS REFLECTED IN THE PREAMBULAR PARAGRAPHS OF THE DECLARATION.

NO ONE, OF COURSE, CAN DENY THAT PROVISION OF ADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES IS A MATTER FOR CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON A PRIORITY BASIS. EQUALLY, NO ONE CAN DENY THAT PROVISION OF

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ADEQUATE FERTILIZER IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IS ONE OF THE KEYS TO INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION. AND WE NOTE THE COLOMBO DECLARATION MAKES REFERENCE TO THE ACTION WE TOOK YESTERDAY ON FERTILIZER. IT IS IN THIS CONNECTION THAT WE SHOULD LIKE TO AGAIN REASSURE THIS DISTINGUISHED GATHERING THAT THIS MATTER IS OF HIGH PRIORITY CONCERN WITHIN OUR GOVERNMENT. WE SHOULD LIKE ALSO TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD FOOD

CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN GENEVA WILL HAVE THIS MATTER AS ONE OF ITS PRINCIPAL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION. IN ADDITION THE FAO COMMISSION ON FERTILIZER WILL BE SEIZED OF THIS PROBLEM AT ITS MEETING IN EARLY JULY. MY GOVERNMENT BELIVES THAT THESE SCHEDULED MEETINGS PLUS THE THIRD SESSION OF THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WILL PROVIDE AMPLE OPPORTINUITY TO CANVASS POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS TO ALLEVIATE SOME OF THE CONDITIONS NOTED IN THE DECLARATION. CERTAINLY THE COLOMBO DECLARATION WILL ADD YET ANOTHER DIMENSION TO THESE DISCUSSIONS. IT IS IN THIS LIGHT THAT WE SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF THIS DECLARATION. MY GOVERNMENT WILL ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE POSSIBLE ACTIONS THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN TAKE IN THIS GRAVE MATTER.

MR. CHAIRMAN: THE CRY FROM THE HEART REFLECTED IN THE STATEMENTS OF ALMOST ALL DELEGATIONS TO THIS CONFERENCE AND NOW EMBODIED IN THE COLOMBO DECLARATION WILL CERTAINLY BE HEARD.

FULL TEXT OF COLOMBO DECLARATION FOLLOWS:

COLOMBO DECLARATION. THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS TWENTIETH SESSION, GRAVELY CONCERNED OVER THE SEVERITY OF CURRENT FOODSHORTAGES, RISING PRICES OF OIL, RAW MATERIALS AND INDUSTRIAL COMMODITES, AND THE CRITICAL BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION FACING MANY COUNTRIES OF THE REGION, REAFFIRMING THE ASPIRATIONS, RESPONSIBILITY AND THE WILL OF THE PEOPLES OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THEIR NATIONAL ECONOMIES ON THE PRINCIPLE OF INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-RELIANCE, AND TO PROMOTE COOPERATION AMONG COUNTRIES ON THE BAIS OF EQUALITY AND MUTUAL

BENEFIT, RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF ADOPTING AN INTERGRATED APPROACH TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOLVING THESE PRIORITY PROBLEMS, CONSCIOUS OF ITS REPONSIBILITY FOR PROMOTING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEMBER COUNTIRES OF THE REGION, AND FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTINUING TO GIVE A LEAD IN REGIONAL COOPERATION, RECOGNIZING THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF WHICH IT IS A PART MUST NOW TURN TO MEET THE NEW CHALLENGES OUTLINED ABOVE, EXPRESSES THE VIEW THAT THE MOST URGNET PRIORITIES FOR ITS

ACTION ARE THEREFORE IN THE FIELDS OF FOOD, ENERGY, RAW MATERIALS AND EXTERNAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES; URGES ITS MEMBERS TO MOBILIZE ALL THEIR AVAILABLE DOMESTIC RESOURCES AND STRENGTHEN THEIR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AT THE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS TO MEET THESE PRIORITIES; CALLS UPON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO FOCUS AS ITS HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR CONCERTED ACTION ON ENSURING ADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES, INCLUDING THE BUILD-UP OF ADEQUATE RESERVES AND TO CONSIDER AMONG OTHER MEASURES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORLD FERTILIZER FUND, AS

PROPOSED IN ECAFE RESOLUTION ... (XXX);
CALLS UPON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, AS PROPOSED IN ECAFE
RESOLUTION ... (XXX), TO CONSIDER THAT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES BE PRO-
VIDED ON CONCESSIONARY TERMS TO ASSIST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN
MEETING THEIR URGENT BALANCE OF PAYMENTS NEEDS AND LONG-TERM
DEVELOPMENTAL REQUIREMENTS;
DECLARES ECAFE'S OWN RESOLVE TO INTENSIFY ACTION IN THE
IDENTIFIED PRIORITY AREAS, TO WORK TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED
APPROACH TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND TO ASSIST SUB-
REGIONAL AND OTHER FORMS OF JOINT EFFORT WITHIN THE OVERALL
FRAMEWORK OF REGIONAL COOPERATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE069521
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/INS:RDLORTON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740079-0081
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740462/aaaacegj.tel
Line Count: 183
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 MAY 2002 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2002 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COLOMBO DECLARATION ADOPTED USIA FOR MEDIA REACTION STAFF (IOR/M), IPS, IBS, IOP
TAGS: OCON, ECAFE
To: NEW DELHI KATHMANDU
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005